

explains that games are not so much a tool for escapism but rather a way to use our best selves. Gamers are extremely productive and collaborative within the realm of a game.”

It should be noted that gamification is an important teaching and learning strategy and incorporating gamification into one’s blended learning course can increase participation, boost engagement and simply enhance the joy of learning.

Reference

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FROM TEACHER TO FACILITATOR

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"Of the best leader, when the job is done the people say 'we did it ourselves.' " – Lao Tzu in the Tao Te Ching

When thinking of a person who helps to acquire new knowledge, competences, or skills, the first person who comes to our mind is a teacher. But even being a teacher we often have to edge over into different roles. In this paper, we are going to discuss the role shift, the skills needed to accomplish the change from a giver of information to a facilitator of learning,

First of all, we need to understand what actually a facilitator is, what their main responsibilities are. So, a facilitator is someone who engages in facilitation – in any activity that makes a process easier. A facilitator helps a group of people to work together, meet the necessary goals, accomplish what you have planned to do. They remain neutral on content, ensure balanced participation, encourage different points of view and guide the group to make decisions.

To see what makes a teacher and a facilitator different, let’s consider some of the examples:

- a teacher is in charge of the learning process, a facilitator is a guide to help people move through a process;
- a teacher is a content expert, a facilitator is not the source of knowledge, they draw opinions and ideas from group participants;
- a teacher decides what students should do, a facilitator asks participants what they would like to do;
- a teacher evaluates students, figures out how much students have learned, how well students have done, a facilitator lets the group evaluate themselves and figure out how well they have done;
- a group is usually seated in rows looking at the person (teacher) standing

before them;

- a group is usually seated in circles looking at each other (facilitated class);

It is also important to note that teachers often act as facilitators, and facilitators sometimes teach. To succeed in both roles one should be an active listener. This is the skill we often neglect, and seldom consider to be something requiring knowledge and practice. Active listening involves paying attention, reflecting, clarifying, giving feedback, summarizing and sharing. Active listeners often ask questions to clarify what group members are saying, try to understand other people's point of view. This is one of the most essential skills facilitators should possess.

To create the group process and environment in which it can thrive, to help the group reach a successful decision, solution or conclusion, facilitators use different facilitation tools.

These facilitation tools, also called interactive facilitation techniques, or actually games can be an effective way of starting a training session or team-building event. They help people get to know each other, to understand the purpose of the event. They help a facilitator to quickly assess the group participants' understanding in the target topic or whether group participants have mastered the material, such techniques encourage interactivity, make participants become attentive and involved.

There are different types of techniques, and all of them can be used depending on the desired outcome, your teaching style and personality. There are small or large class techniques, many of them can be used as partnerwork or groupwork, also one can use Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Wikis, Blogs, icebreakers and games, interaction through homework, questions, role-plays, student presentations, brainstorming, etc.

A good teacher can have a powerful impact on students, a direct influence in enhancing their learning. Today, the role of a teacher is expanding and changing to meet the demands of a new age. It might be just a small step for us but it will be a giant leap for our students.

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